

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A disc cartridge, comprising:

a disc in a disc shape, including a recording layer for recording/reproducing information;

a disc cover for covering at least a part of one side of the disc; and

connecting means for connecting the disc and the disc cover,

wherein a side of the disc, which is opposite to the side of the disc covered by the disc cover, is exposed externally.

2. The disc cartridge as set forth in Claim 1, wherein the disc includes a disc substrate, the recording layer, and a protective layer, which is transparent, in this order, wherein at least a part of a side of the disc, on which the protective layer is formed, is covered by the disc cover so that the side of the disc on which the protective layer is formed is subjected to light projected thereon, so as to record/reproduce information.

3. The disc cartridge as set forth in Claim 1, wherein the disc cover includes an outer touching section that touches the disc in a vicinity of an outer

Fig. 1

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circumference thereof when the disc cover is connected with the disc.

4. The disc cartridge as set forth in Claim 3, wherein the outer touching section is made of an elastic material.

5. The disc cartridge as set forth in Claim 1, wherein the disc cover includes an inner touching section that touches the disc in a vicinity of an inner circumference thereof when the disc cover is connected with the disc.

6. The disc cartridge as set forth in Claim 5, wherein the inner touching section is made of an elastic material.

7. The disc cartridge as set forth in Claim 1, wherein the connecting means includes (a) a hub section in an inner circumference part of the disc and (b) an inner touching section of the disc cover, for touching the disc in a vicinity of an inner circumference thereof, both the hub section and the inner touching section having a magnetic material, so as to maintain the connection between the disc and the disc cover by a

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magnetic attractive force between the hub section and the inner touching section.

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8. The disc cartridge as set forth in Claim 1, wherein the disc has a disc projected section in an inner circumference part thereof, the disc projected section being projected toward the disc cover and having a recessed section on a side wall thereof, and the disc cover having a projecting section, so that the projecting section can be inserted in or pulled out with respect to the recessed section.

9. The disc cartridge as set forth in Claim 1, wherein the disc cover includes a disc holding lock for mechanically holding an outer circumference part of the disc in such a manner that the disc holding lock switches over whether the outer circumference part of the disc is held or not.

10. The disc cartridge as set forth in Claim 2, wherein the protective layer has a thickness ranging from 0 to 20 $\mu$ m.

11. The disc cartridge as set forth in Claim 2, wherein the disc substrate is made of an anti-static

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12. The disc cartridge as set forth in Claim 2,  
wherein the disc substrate is made of a material  
selected from resins, metals and glasses.

14. The disc cartridge as set forth in Claim 2,  
wherein the protective layer is made of a material  
whose surface is slippery.

15. The disc cartridge as set forth in Claim 2, wherein the protective layer is made of a material selected from resins and glasses.

16. The disc cartridge as set forth in Claim 1, wherein at least a part of the disc cover is made of a material selected from resins and metals.

17. The disc cartridge as set forth in Claim 1 wherein the disc cover has a side wall around an outer circumference thereof, the side wall being projected

toward the disc so as to protect an outer circumference side surface of the disc.

18. The disc cartridge as set forth in Claim 17, wherein the disc cover has a region which has no side wall in at least part of the outer circumference of the disc cover.

19. The disc cartridge as set forth in Claim 17, wherein at least a part of the side wall is for opening/closing.

20. The disc cartridge as set forth in Claim 1, wherein the disc cover includes a shutter for switching over whether the disc is exposed or unexposed.

21. A disc drive for using a disc cartridge, which includes (a) a disc in a disc shape, including a recording layer for recording/reproducing information, (b) a disc cover for covering at least a part of one side of the disc, and (c) connecting means for connecting the disc and the disc cover, wherein a side of the disc, which is opposite to the side of the disc covered by the disc cover, is exposed externally, the disc cartridge, comprising:

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a head for recording/reproducing with respect to the disc; and

separating means for separating the disc and the disc cover, so as to allow the head to be inserted between the disc and disc cover so that the recording/reproducing is performed.

22. The disc drive as set forth in Claim 21, further comprising:

a spindle motor for rotating the disc,

wherein the separating means acts as moving means for moving the disc cover in a direction of a rotation axis of the disc, while leaving the disc on the spindle motor, so as to separate the disc and the disc cover, when the disc cartridge is inserted to be placed on the spindle motor.

23. The disc drive as set forth in Claim 22, wherein the spindle motor holds the disc by a magnetic attractive force.

24. A disc drive for using a disc cartridge, which includes (a) a disc in a disc shape, including a recording layer for recording/reproducing information, (b) a disc cover for covering at least a part of one

side of the disc, (c) connecting means for connecting the disc and the disc cover, and (d) a shutter, being provided on the disc cover, for switching over whether the disc is exposed or unexposed, wherein a side of the disc, which is opposite to the side of the disc covered by the disc cover, is exposed externally, the disc drive, comprising:

a head for recording/reproducing with respect to the disc; and

shutter opening/closing means for opening/closing the shutter,

wherein the head is moved close to the disc that is exposed through the shutter opened by the shutter opening/closing means, so that the recording/reproducing is performed.

24. The disc drive as set forth in Claim 21, wherein the head includes a magnetic head section for applying a magnetic field onto the disc, and an optical head section for projecting and detecting a laser beam.

25. The disc drive as set forth in Claim 24, wherein the head includes a magnetic head section for applying a magnetic field onto the disc, and an optical head section for projecting and detecting a laser beam.

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